

THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

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Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

THE POSITION OF MAJOR-GENERAL SANDFORD.

Some misapprehension has existed with respect to the position which Major-General Sandford occupies. He is in command of the department of Fairfax, Virginia, which embraces the State east of the Alleghenies, excepting those portions comprised within the departments of Generals Mansfield and Butler. The limits of the former reach to the former boundaries of the District of Columbia, before the retrocession of Alexandria. The latter includes Norfolk and the country forty miles around it.

PROCLAMATION TO THE INHABITANTS OF FAIRFAX COUNTY.

Gen. Sandford has issued the following proclamation:

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF FAIRFAX, VA.,

ARLINGTON, May 26, 1861.

Fairfax County being occupied by the troops under my command, I deem it proper to repeat publicly the assurance I have personally given to many of the good citizens of this county, that all of its inhabitants may return to or remain in their homes, and may pursue their occupations in peace and confidence, and with assured protection to their persons and property, as the United States forces in Virginia will be employed for no other purpose than that of suppressing unlawful combinations against the constituted authorities of the Union, and of causing the laws thereof to be duly respected and executed.

By order of
GEORGE W. SANDFORD, Division Commander.

THE PENNSYLVANIA REGIMENTS.

Mr. Benjamin Haywood, a large proprietor of iron rolling mills, and a prominent citizen of Schuylkill County, Pa., is here, on a mission from Gov. Curtin, in behalf of the Pennsylvania regiments here. His instructions are contained in the following letter from the Governor, who seems strongly desirous that abuses which have sprung up and excited such loud complaints be remedied. The letter was read to the Fourth and Fifth regiments this afternoon, to their great gratification:

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, Harrisburg, May 24, 1861.

DEAR SIR: I learned from General Biddle, Adjutant-General, and my Aid, Colonel R. Biddle Roberts, that the condition of the Pennsylvania troops now in Washington City was deplorable to the State, and that it was more important that the men were generally suffering, both from want of proper clothing and a sense of shame. It is, of course, useless to say to you how mortified I am at such a condition of things, and how determined that the same shall be at once remedied so far as the same is in my power.

I requested you, last evening, to proceed at once to Washington City and take charge of this matter. You will be glad enough to examine fully into the character of the clothing of every description which has been furnished to our regiments now there. Ascertain the deficiencies of every kind, of defect of material, irregularity of color and faulty manufacture, and at once inform me what is required to make the men comfortable in any and every way, and to place the regiments upon a footing, so far as comfort, health, and the army regulations will permit, with any in the service of the United States. An agent will be sent with the clothing and other supplies, and it is my desire that you remain in Washington City, or wherever the regiments may be, and you see that my wishes and directions in this respect have been fully carried out. I confidently believe that before this, all these matters had been attended to faithfully and well, and can now, while regretting that my exertions had been so frustrated, only press upon you energetic and prompt action in this behalf for the comfort of our gallant and patriotic citizens now in the ranks of these regiments, and the preservation of the honor of the State.

Yours truly,
A. G. CURTIN.

Mr. Haywood has transmitted a report to Gov. Curtin, in which full details are given of the condition of the regiments. The 25th, Col. Calk, quartered at the Arsenal and Fort Washington, are not badly off, having United States uniforms. The 4th, Col. Hartshorn, and the 5th, Col. McDowell, are suffering greatly. The blankets and pants are of all colors, and made of damaged goods of inferior quality, mostly of "shoddy," and some of "Kentucky jean." The blankets are of the quality of ice blankets, not fit for horses. The shoes are of wretched material. The beds come off, and they are constantly ripping. Many are almost barefoot. The underclothing is tolerable, but there is an insufficient supply. The report among the troops is that their appearance was so bad that Gen. Mansfield said they were not fit to take the field. But, really, at the bottom, they are in the best trim for fighting—loyal, true, uncomplaining, and making fun of their miseries in songs.

THE PROPOSED CAPTURE OF WASHINGTON.

The First of June is at hand, and Jeff. Davis and wife are not worshipping to-day in their old pew in the Church of Epiphany. Their chances of being there next Sunday are small, unless an attack is made upon entrenchments, whether near Long Bridge or Georgetown Aqueduct. Within forty-eight hours they will be found impracticable. After dark last night, and from 4 o'clock this morning, men were hard at work with shovel and pick—the Seventh are considered next to the Sixty-ninth in the trenches; Gen. Mansfield says there are no better diggers, making up in pluck what they lack in experience.

RETURN OF THE SEVENTH.

The Seventh returned to Camp Cameron this evening, in obedience to the following order:

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF FAIRFAX, VA.,
WASHINGTON, May 26, 1861.

Col. LAFAYETTE, Commanding N. Y. 7th Regiment.

Sir: Your regiment has accomplished all that was intended by it in crossing over to Arlington to take possession of the light and, having landed on the entrenchments also. The security of this city makes it imperative that you should resume your encampment on this side, and you will, this afternoon, march over accordingly, and fold your regiment here ready to turn out when called upon. Very respectfully,

JAS. M. MANSFIELD, Brigadier-General, Commanding.

It would have done Fifth Avenue good to see its sons cumulating each other in shoveling until their hands were covered with blisters, for three nights, without tents, in a grove on the borders of a swamp. They stopped work to-day only long enough for service.

ANOTHER ACCIDENT.

This afternoon Mr. Frothingham, of the fifth Company, was shot, accidentally, by a reporter of a Michigan paper, one of Col. Wilcox's aids. He was showing him a Secessionist paper. He received a flesh wound in one of his legs.

THE ATTACK ON RICHMOND.

The country need not be surprised if, in the course of three weeks, a forward movement be made on Richmond, from resources entirely separate from the reserves at or near Washington, and which will be so overwhelming in force as to render success certain. The possession of Harper's Ferry may be secured by a flank movement.

The first New-Jersey regiment crossed into Virginia this evening. Wagons, with camp equipage and stores, have been crossing the bridge all day.

CONDITION OF THE TROOPS.

All the regiments are now well supplied. The Smithsonian grounds are occupied by a horde of bees. I visited Arlington House this afternoon. The trees and turf are in June luxuriance and beauty. The garden is a mass of flowers. The prospect of the river and city is charming. Gen. Sandford was not there. The headquarters were in charge of Col. Alex. Hamilton, of the staff of Gen. Sandford, and Col. Lyons of the New-York Eighth, which marched from Washington, and whose tents are in the woods about the house. Gen. Sandford told them that this was emphatically the post of honor.

The telegraph is nearly completed from Washington and Alexandria to Arlington House. Among the visitors to-day was Leutze, the painter. Gen. Sandford was courteous in taking possession of the house. He yesterday sent to inquire whether the family of Gen. Lee was there, and to offer a guard if so. When assured that they left a fortnight ago, he sent to Gen. Lee to say that he was obliged to make Arlington House his quarters, and would see that the premises received no damage. Twelve or fifteen servants were in the house, with a month's provisions. Most of the furniture was removed. I subsequently visited the 69th's intrenchments at Georgetown, which are of a character to defy assault.

CAPTURE OF SPIES, ETC.

Senator Chandler, who has just returned from Alexandria, reports the capture of one spy to-day, and three yesterday, and the seizure of 250 concealed pistols, 500 rounds of ammunition, and a large quantity of military clothing which were found in suspected houses. Last night the picket were fired on by Secessionists, and both the Zouaves and the Michigan Regiments were under arms all night. Col. Wilcox this morning informed the inhabitants that they could have peace or war, at their option, but that if they shot down his men the consequences would be on their own heads. Secessionists afflicted with a sickness which requires a warmer climate are eager for passes out of town, which Col. Wilcox gives.

Another visitor to Alexandria was told by an old friend, a wealthy citizen of the place, that he was a Union man until Friday, when Virginia soil was invaded by Federal troops. The people were greatly aggravated by the presence of the Zouaves and their sacred soil. The Mayor of Alexandria declared to-day that the people would prefer the presence of ten other regiments. The objection to them is not that they are disorderly, but that they are not of the "first families."

Among the most violent Secessionists that have left town was the Episcopal clergyman of the church where Washington worshipped. Arms were found in the Mansion House, where Washington received a major's commission from Gen. Braddock. Jackson, the murderer of Ellsworth, had made great preparations for a conflict. He had in his own possession a number of the most destructive weapons, including a volcanic rifle—capable of thirty-two discharges without reloading—Colt's revolving rifles, double-barreled guns, revolvers, and a small howitzer. He had persistently boasted of his individual power to hold his house against any attack.

In the vicinity of Rosch's House, Arlington, occupied by a cavalry regiment, are a number of Secessionist inhabitants. They offer mild remonstrances from hour to hour, but still endeavor at all times to gain the good will of the soldiers.

SEWELL'S POINT.

No official news from Sewell's Point has been received here, and the report of the attack is not credited at the War Department.

AN ARTIST IN THE TRENCHES.

Mr. Gifford, the artist who is attached to the 7th, has thrown away the pencil for the spade for the past two days. He has worked vigorously with the rest in the Virginia trenches.

COULDN'T WAIT.

At the signal of warning yesterday afternoon, when the Massachusetts 5th was forming, a Zouave, out on leave, rushed violently past the guard, snatched a stray musket and joined the ranks, from which he would not budge. He thus went to Virginia.

THE RHODE ISLAND REGIMENT.

The Rhode Island Regiment, in point of equipments and discipline is now pronounced superior to any corps in or about Washington. Within five minutes after the warning of yesterday this regiment was in marching order, with baggage and provisions. The Massachusetts Fifth, however, was the first to enter Virginia, every man, even those in the Hospital, rushing to his place in the ranks, and joining in double-quick march across the Long Bridge.

APPOINTMENT.

Gen. Pierce of Massachusetts is appointed Brigadier-General, in place of Gen. Butler, promoted. He is ordered to report here, and will be sent to Fortress Monroe.

A RETIRED ARMY LIST.

A bill will be introduced into Congress early in the Session, providing for retired list in the army, which will place the officers of the service, too old for active duty, on half pay.

GOV. BANKS.

Gov. Banks, whose arrival was noticed yesterday, is here by invitation of friends, and at the suggestion of Government he will undoubtedly be appointed to an important command in the army.

THE DEPARTURE OF SECRETARY CAMERON.

Secretary Cameron was prevented, by public business, from leaving last night, after making all his arrangements.

THE ALARM YESTERDAY.

The true history of the alarm yesterday is this: One of the picket guard of the New-York

12th reported to the officer that he was fired upon. A message was sent by the officer to Long Bridge, then telegraphed to Gen. Scott, who believed up to a late hour that a skirmish had taken place. It was "discovered to-day that there was no firing whatever."

Officers at the Arsenal are sure they heard pickets firing for a quarter of an hour. Pickets on the Treasury Buildings are confident the saw regiments in line of battle, driving the foe down the hill, and were so delighted that they cheered.

THE MOVEMENT ON THURSDAY.

The army officers express great admiration of the coolness and precision with which the movement into Virginia on Thursday night was executed. At the time that concerted signals were made every regiment was in proper position in the enemy's country.

COL. FAIRHAM.

Acting Col. Fairham, of the Zouaves, visited the New-York Seventh last night, was received with enthusiasm, and carried round on their shoulders.

SENATOR WILSON.

Senator Wilson is about among the Massachusetts troops, looking carefully after their wants.

REBEL CAVALRY.

A company of Rebel cavalry, several hundred in number, wandered in view of our advanced pickets this morning, and an effort to cut them off is now progressing; our patrols penetrate the Rebel country to the distance of 20 miles in various directions.

To the Associated Press.

WASHINGTON, May 26, 1861.

Accounts from Alexandria, received from trustworthy sources, represent that all was quiet there during last night.

The troops are comfortably quartered, and ready for all emergencies.

That city, it is represented, was free from the alarm which yesterday afternoon pervaded this city.

Several of the District of Columbia Volunteer companies have proceeded in the direction of Alexandria.

The 8th New-York and 5th Massachusetts regiments have moved into Virginia.

All orders for the moving of troops are not only cheerfully but anxiously obeyed. Military veterans are lavish in their praises of them.

Between 10 and 11 o'clock this morning the report of cannon near the Capitol occasioned much alarm, which, however, soon subsided on learning that a squad of the 3d Regiment of New-York were practicing with field-guns, they not being aware, at the time, that firing is prohibited in the street. The squad afterward went through their evolutions as they passed along Pennsylvania avenue, showing much skill.

The dispatch sent hence yesterday of the reported capture of Sewell's Point by Gen. Butler's command on Friday, was based on the unqualified statement of *The Washington National Republican* extra, there being no means at the time of ascertaining the precise truth of the statement, which, however, needs official confirmation.

The Yankee has not arrived here.

Postmaster-General Blair has just issued the following order:

"All postal service in the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas, will be suspended from and after the 31st inst. Letters for office temporarily closed by this order, will be forwarded to the dead letter office, except those for Western Virginia, which will be sent to Wheeling."

Major Haskin, who is in command at Fort Washington, a few miles below Alexandria, on the Maryland side, has thoroughly strengthened his position. A battery will be erected on the hill immediately behind the fort.

A gentleman who arrived last night, at midnight, from Alexandria, says in searching the city several hundred muskets, rifles, revolvers, and ammunition, were found stored in the trenches.

A number of arrests were made to-day of persons with concealed weapons.

NORFOLK TO BE ATTACKED SOON.

AFFAIRS AT FORTRESS MONROE.

PHILADELPHIA, May 26, 1861.

Capt. Cone of the United States Mail steamer John A. Warner reached this city to-day, having left his boat at Wilmington, to ascertain the truth of the report about Sewell's Point. He says he left Fortress Monroe on Saturday morning at 7 o'clock, up to which time no battle had taken place. He was in the Fortress on Friday evening, and understood from a conversation with Capt. Fremont that no movement would be made until further reinforcements arrived, when an attack would probably be made on Norfolk.

As Capt. Cone was going out of the Bay he saw 1,500 troops coming in. He confirms the report about the capture of Hampton with 300 troops. He was lying in the Bay for two or three days previous to sailing, and he even doubted the arrival of the Yankee at Washington, as reported; as he was at the Fortress when he left, and it would take fifteen hours to make the trip.

The Kingston left on Friday with a large ship in tow, supposed to be a pirate. Several prizes are taken daily by the blockading squadron. Two or three vessels from Richmond for Baltimore were released.

The flag-ship Minnesota, Commander Stirlingham, had steam up when he left. She was soon to sail under sealed orders.

On Friday evening, Capt. Cone visited Fortress Monroe. There was a dress parade in the afternoon, in which all the troops participated. There were from five to six thousand men at the fort—an acreage of nearly three thousand over the previous week, two Massachusetts and one Vermont regiment having arrived during the week. They were all well.

Gen. Butler returned to Fort Monroe after the occupation of Hampton. The Captain viewed the action at Sewell's Point last Sunday. Five out of the eight guns were dismounted. He does not think any lives were lost. The Star fired 100 shots, when her ammunition gave out. Subsequently a small propeller came up, and fired a few shots at the batteries and retired.

The Captain is certain he could not have left without a knowledge of the engagement, reported to have taken place on Friday.

He passed Sewell's Point on the way Saturday morning. All was quiet. Action was soon mediated, however, on the arrival of more troops, even to a speedy attack on Norfolk.

FORTRESS MONROE, Saturday evening.

VIA BALTIMORE, May 26, 1861.

Colonel Duryee's Zouaves arrived this morning by the Alabama. They have encamped on this side of the Hampton Bridge, with the Vermont and Troy regiments. The Pembroke has also arrived with two companies of Massachusetts troops. There are now about 6,000 men within or under the walls of the fortress.

The Quaker City came up with a rich prize this morning—the bark Winifred of Richmond, from Rio Janeiro, laden with coffee.

The Minnesota sailed southward to-day. Commodore Stringham will, it is said, go the gulf squadron.

Gen. Butler, accompanied by acting Adjutant-General Tallmadge and his aids, made a dash reconnaissance several miles between the James and York rivers. A picket guard of Rebels fled on their approach.

Three fugitives, the property of Col. Mallory, Commander of the Rebel forces near Hampton, were brought in by our picket guard yesterday. They represent that they were about to be sent South, and hence sought protection. Major Carry came in with a flag of truce, and claimed their rendition under the Fugitive Slave law, but was informed by Gen. Butler that under the peculiar circumstances, he considered the fugitives combatant of war, and had set them to work inside the fortress.

Col. Mallory was politely informed that so soon as he should visit the fortress and take a solemn oath to obey the laws of the United States, his property would promptly be restored.

Another party came in this morning under a flag of truce, but with no better success.

On their return, it is supposed that they set fire to Hampton Bridge. An immense volume of smoke being now visible in that direction.

EXPECTED ATTACK ON NORFOLK TO-DAY.

BALTIMORE, May 26, 1861.

The steamer Adelaide has arrived by 3:00 P. M. General Butler was reinforced yesterday by 3,000 troops from New-York and Maine. They are encamped on Col. Segar's farm.

It was understood that the Adelaide left that Norfolk would be attacked on Monday. It was said that the Rebels there are confident of their ability to hold Norfolk against any force.

The bridge connecting Old Point Comfort and Hampton has been burnt by the rebels. No communication is allowed between Portsmouth and Norfolk.

FROM ALEXANDRIA.

MARTIAL LAW PROCLAIMED.

BALTIMORE, May 26, 1861.

The following is a special dispatch to *The American*:

ALEXANDRIA, Saturday, May 26, 1861.

Col. Wilcox, commanding here, has issued a proclamation proclaiming strict martial law.

Capt. Whiteley of the Michigan Regiment is appointed Provost Marshal, and Company H of that regiment, City Police. The citizens are assured that they will be protected in their persons, property, and slaves. All public property will be respected, unless the United States forces should be attacked. The citizens are prohibited from entering or leaving the city without a written permit. All outrages or excesses by the Federal soldiers will be promptly punished, if reported.

The pickets of the forces at Alexandria were last night fired upon, and the troops called to arms in consequence, but nobody was hurt.

The 7th Regiment will return home, it is stated, on Wednesday.

Strong and extensive intrenchments are being erected by the United States troops on the Virginia heights. They entirely command the approaches from Alexandria.

The city is quiet. The body of Jackson, who shot Col. Ellsworth, has been taken to Fairfax County for burial. All the furniture has been removed from the Marshall House, and it is now in the occupancy of the United States forces.

Sergeant Butterworth, of the New-York Zouaves, was shot last night at Alexandria, by Mike O'Neal, of the same corps, who was acting as sentry, and receiving no reply to his challenge, fired, and instantly killed the former. Butterworth was a sluttish, and his falling to ground was caused by this infirmity.

The Marshall House is the hotel at which Gen. Washington stopped, and Col. Ellsworth was shot near the door of the chamber Gen. Washington occupied.

MOVEMENT TOWARD HARPER'S FERRY.

BALTIMORE, May 26, 1861.

It is reported here that the troops at the Relay House are to go up the road toward Harper's Ferry to-morrow, and that the Philadelphia regiments will go to the Relay House, while this post will be occupied by the recruits recently mustered into service here.

The statement of the track being torn up near Harper's Ferry is not true. Trains are arriving from beyond that point.

A regiment arrived over the Northern Central Railroad this afternoon, and marched through the western section of the city, taking the Catonsville road.

Merryman is still at Fort McHenry. It is reported that several changes have been made against him. Effort will be made for habeas corpus to-morrow, but it is said this will be resisted by orders from the Government.

Several heavy columbards were mounted at Fort Mc Henry to-day.

PLAN FOR THE CAPTURE OF HARPER'S FERRY.

BALTIMORE, May 26, 1861.

I have just learned that a plan has been matured which will place Harper's Ferry in our possession. There are numerous country roads in Washington and Frederick counties, Maryland, all of which converge to and unite at or near the Maryland Heights, opposite Harper's Ferry.

Three of these roads come from the direction of Hagerstown, two from Frederick City, and one from Emmetsburg and Gettysburg, the latter the terminus of the railroad from Lancaster and York, Pa. The country north and back of the Maryland Heights is open, accessible, and scarcely defensible. A strong force marching along these roads will attack the batteries in the rear, the only place where they will be put at the head of the expedition, but certainly not before.

There are only two regiments of Virginia troops at Grafton; but the three North Carolina regiments who were at Culpepper last week had orders to move in that direction, and are now en route, probably in the neighborhood of Strasburg or Winchester. This is from reliable Southern authority. This Culpepper is in Culpepper County, and is not the Fairfax near Washington.

The reported destruction of bridges on the railroad between Alexandria and Leesburg will prevent any movements of Southern troops from Harper's Ferry toward Washington; and if this is followed by taking possession of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad as far as Culpepper and Charlottesville, and of the Fredericksburg Railroad, the rebels at Harper's Ferry will be completely hemmed in and cut off from all communication. This will probably be done.

Until these railroads are in our possession reinforcements can be sent to Harper's Ferry.

There are 10,000 Virginia troops at Manassas Gap Junction, 27 miles from Alexandria and 33 miles from Culpepper. They can be reinforced from Richmond and Gordonsville, and will no doubt fight desperately if attacked.

The report that Ballman Rock, at Harper's Ferry, had been blasted with gunpowder and thrown upon the track, is false. It was imperfectly mined, and the train fired, but the rock stands firm. It is forty feet above the track.

Five thousand barrels of bacon have passed through Gordonsville during the last week for the troops at Harper's Ferry.

THE VIRGINIA ELECTION.

MARIETTA, Ohio, May 26, 1861.

We have the following election returns from Western Virginia:

President, 1860.

Counties. Union. Secession. Lincoln. Bell. Breck. Doug.

Baltimore..... 250..... 213..... 300..... 106

Berkeley..... 289..... 242..... 319..... 82

Catoctin..... 623..... 516..... 561..... 197

Doddridge..... 569..... 483..... 511..... 107

Fayette..... 1,000..... 840..... 880..... 280

Frederick..... 400..... 338..... 369..... 122

Garrettsville..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Harper's Ferry..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Marshall..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Monroe..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Shenandoah..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Stonewall..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Summit..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Taylor..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Warren..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

West..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Wood..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Yankee..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400

Zouave..... 1,200..... 1,000..... 1,100..... 400